

quality and character of that result is to be properly judged.

What we are doing is to hear the whole case—hear it from the mouths of the men most interested; hear from those who are officially commissioned to state it; hear the rival claims; hear the claims that affect new nationalities, that affect new areas of the world, that affect new commercial and economic connections; that have been established by the great world war through which we have gone. And I have been struck by the moderateness of those who have represented national claims. I can testify that I have nowhere seen the gleam of passion. I have seen earnestness, I have seen tears come to the eyes of men who plead for downtrodden people whom they were privileged to speak for; but they were not the tears of anguish, they were the tears of ardent hope.

And I don't see how any man can fail to have been subdued by these pleas—subdued to this feeling that he was not there to assert an individual judgment of his own but to try to assist the case of humanity.

NONE SUSPECTS UNITED STATES

And in the midst of it all every interest seeks out first of all, when it reaches Paris, the representatives of the United States. Why? Because—and I think I am stating the most wonderful fact in history—because there is no nation in Europe that suspects the motives of the United States.

Was there ever so wonderful a thing seen before? Was there ever so moving a thing? Was there ever any fact that so bound the nation that had won that esteem forever to deserve it?

I would not have you understand that the great men who represent the other nations there in conference are disesteemed by those who know them. Quite the contrary. But you understand that the nations of Europe have again and again clashed with one another in competitive interest. It is impossible for men to forget those sharp issues that were drawn between them in times past. It is impossible for men to believe that all ambitions have all of a sudden been foregone. They remember territory that was coveted; they remember rights that it was attempted to extort; they remember political ambitions which it was attempted to realize, and, while they believe that men have come into a different temper, they cannot forget these things, and so they do not resort to one another for a dispassionate view of the matters in controversy. They resort to that nation which has won the enviable distinction of being regarded as the friend of mankind.

Whenever it is desired to send a small force of soldiers to occupy a piece of territory where it is thought nobody else will be welcome they ask for American soldiers. And where other soldiers would be looked upon with suspicion and perhaps meet with resistance the American soldier is welcomed with acclaim.

I have had so many grounds for pride on the other side of the water that I am very thankful that they are not grounds for personal pride, but for national pride. If they were grounds for personal pride I'd be the most stuck-up man in the world. And it has been an infinite pleasure to me to see those gallant soldiers of ours, of whom the constitution of the United States made me the proud commander. You may be proud of the Twenty-sixth division, but I commanded the Twenty-sixth division, and see what they did under my direction! And everybody praises the American soldier with the feeling that in praising him he is subtracting from the credit of no one else.

THEY SAW AMERICA ACTED IDEALS

I have been searching for the fundamental fact that converted Europe to believe in us. Before this war Europe did not believe in us as she does now. She did not believe in us throughout the first three years of the war. She seems really to have believed that we were holding off because we thought we could make more by staying out than by going in. And all of a sudden, in a short eighteen months, the whole verdict is reversed. There can be but one explanation for it. They saw what we did—that without making a single claim we put all our men and all our means at the disposal of those who were fighting for their homes, in the first instance, but for a cause—the cause of human rights and justice—and that we went in not to support their national claims but to support the great cause which they held in common.

And when they saw that America not only held ideals but acted ideals they were converted

to America and became firm partisans of those ideals.

I met a group of scholars when I was in Paris—some gentlemen from one of the Greek universities who had come to see me and in whose presence, or rather in the presence of whose traditions of learning, I felt very young indeed. I told them that I had one of the delightful revenges that sometimes comes to a man. All my life I had heard men speak with a sort of condescension of ideals and of idealists, and particularly those separated, encloistered persons whom they choose to term academic, who were in the habit of uttering ideals in the free atmosphere when they clash with nobody in particular.

And I said I have had this sweet revenge. Speaking with perfect frankness in the name of the people of the United States, I have uttered as the objects of this great war ideals, and nothing but ideals, and the war has been won by that inspiration. Men were fighting with tense muscle and lowered head until they came to realize those things, feeling they were fighting for their lives and their country, and when these accents of what it was all about reached them from America they lifted their heads, they raised their eyes to heaven, when they saw men in khaki coming across the sea in the spirit of strange men, reckless of danger not only but reckless because they seemed to see something that made that danger worth while.

Men have testified to me in Europe that our men were possessed by something that they could only call a religious fervor. They were not like any of the other soldiers. They had a vision, they had a dream, and they were fighting in the dream, they turned the whole tide of battle and it never came back.

One of our American humorists, meeting the criticism that American soldiers were not trained long enough, said: "It takes only half as long to train an American soldier as any other, because you only have to train him one way, and he did only go one way, and he never came back until he could do it when he pleased."

HEART OF EUROPE FULL OF HOPE

And now do you realize that this confidence we have established throughout the world imposes a burden upon us—if you choose to call it a burden. It is one of those burdens which any nation ought to be proud to carry. Any man who resists the present tides that run in the world will find himself thrown upon a shore so high and barren that it will seem as if he had been separated from his human kind forever.

The Europe that I left the other day was full of something that it had never felt all its heart so full before. It was full of hope. The Europe of the second year of the war, the Europe of the third year of the war, was sinking to a sort of stubborn desperation. They did not see any great thing to be achieved even when the war should be won. They hoped there would be some salvage; they hoped that they could clear their territories of invading armies; they hoped they could set up their homes and start their industries afresh. But they thought it would simply be resumption of the old life that Europe had led—led in fear, led in anxiety, led in constant suspicious watchfulness. They never dreamed that it would be a Europe of settled peace and of justified hope.

And now these ideals have wrought this new magic, that all the peoples of Europe are buoyed up and confident in the spirit of hope, because they believe that we are at the eve of a new age in the world when nations will unite every moral and every physical strength to see that the right shall prevail.

If America were at this juncture to fail the world what would come of it? I do not mean any disrespect to any other great people when I say that America is the hope of the world; and if she does not justify that hope the results are unthinkable. Men will be thrown back upon the bitterness of disappointment not only, but the bitterness of despair.

All nations will be set up as hostile camps again; the men at the peace conference will go home with their heads upon their breasts, knowing that they have failed—for they were bidden not to come home from there until they did something more than sign a treaty of peace.

Suppose we sign the treaty of peace and that it is the most satisfactory treaty of peace that the confusing elements of the modern world will afford and go home and think about our labors, we will know that we have left written upon the historic table at Versailles, upon which

Vergennes and Benjamin Franklin wrote their names, nothing but a modern scrap of paper; no nations united to defend it, no great forces combined to make it good, no assurance given to the downtrodden and fearful people of the world that they shall be safe. Any man who thinks that America will take part in giving the world any such rebuff and disappointment as that does not know America.

TEST THE SENTIMENTS OF NATION

I invite him to test the sentiments of the nation. We set this nation up to make men free and we did not confine our conception and purpose to America, and now we will make men free. If we did not do that the fame of America would be gone and all her power would be dissipated. She then would have to keep her power for those narrow, selfish, provincial purposes which seem so dear to some minds that have no sweep beyond the nearest horizon. I should welcome no sweeter challenge than that. I have fighting blood in me and it is sometimes a delight to let it have scope, but if it is a challenge on this occasion it will be an indulgence.

Think of the picture, think of the utter blackness that would fall on the world. America has failed! America made a little essay at generosity and then withdrew. America said, "We are your friends," but it was only for today, not for tomorrow. America said, "Here is our power to vindicate right," and then the next day, "Let right take care of itself and we will take care of ourselves." America said, "We set up a light to lead men along the paths of liberty, but we have lowered it; it is intended only to light our own path." We set up a great ideal of liberty and then we said, "Liberty is a thing that you must win for yourself. Do not call upon us," and think of the world that we would leave.

Do you realize how many new nations are going to be set up in the presence of old and powerful nations in Europe and left there, if left by us, without a disinterested friend?

Do you believe in the Polish cause, as I do? Are you going to set up Poland, immature, inexperienced, as yet unorganized, and leave her with a circle of armies around her? Do you believe in the aspiration of the Czecho-Slovaks and the Jugoslavs, as I do? Do you know how many powers would be quick to pounce upon them if there were not the guarantees of the world behind their liberty?

Have you thought of the sufferings of Armenia? You poured out your money to help succor the Armenians after they suffered; now set your strength so that they shall never suffer again.

The arrangements of the present peace cannot stand a generation unless they are guaranteed by the united forces of the civilized world. And if we do not guarantee them can you not see the picture? Your hearts have instructed you where the burden of this war fell. It did not fall upon the national treasuries; it did fall upon the instruments of administration; it did not fall upon the resources of the nations. It fell upon the victims' homes everywhere, where women were toiling in hope that their men would come back.

When I think of the homes upon which dull despair would settle were this great hope disappointed I should wish for my part never to have had America play any part whatever in this attempt to emancipate the world. But I talk as if there were any question. I have no more doubt of the verdict of America in this matter than I have doubt of the blood that is in me.

THE PEOPLE ARE IN SADDLE

And so, my fellow citizens, I have come back to report progress, and I do not believe that the progress is going to stop short of the goal. The nations of the world have set their heads now to do a great thing, and they are not going to slacken their purpose. And when I speak of the nations of the world I do not speak of the governments of the world. I speak of the peoples who constitute the nations of the world. They are in the saddle, and they are going to see to it that if their present governments do not do their will some other government shall. And the secret is out and the present governments know it.

There is a great deal of harmony to be got out of common knowledge. There is a great deal of sympathy to be got of living in the same atmosphere, and except for the differences of languages, which puzzled my American ear very sadly, I could have believed I was at home in